proxy. At one of them he officially opened the husbandry of the spring by plowing. He was also required to sacrifice to a sacred *yo,* or mountain, when he was near it, or to send a representative to do so. Sacrifices to some other spirits and divinities of lesser rank were performed, not by the Emperor in person but by officials delegated by him.

Many members of the official hierarchy on duty in the provinces were charged with the performance of religious rites. Sacrifices to the spirits of local mountains and streams were expected of them. They also took part in such ceremonies as those in the local temples of Confucius and in the temple of the City God. Officials in the provinces were supposed to offer sacrifices, at the time of the spring planting, to the Gods of the Soil and the Grain. Those of certain grades, including the Viceroy, were required to open the operations of the spring by sacrifices to Sh6n-nung, the ancient mythical Emperor and patron of husbandry, and by plowing. There were also official ceremonies for neglected ghosts-said to have been ordered by Hung Wu, the founder of the Ming, who, an orphan of destitute parents, is reported not to have known the burial place of his father and mother. Visits of officials, either in person or by proxy, were expected to be paid to other divinities, some of them local and some revered by the various crafts. In other words, within their jurisdiction officials had it as one of their functions to insure by the performance of the proper rites the same smooth cooperation between men and the powerful spirits and forces of the universe which, for the entire realm, the Emperor .was expected to maintain.

I The pantheon of the spirits and divinities recognized by the sforte cult was grouped into three grades. In the

first were Heaven and Earth, the deceased Emperors, and the Gods of the Ground and the Grain. Near the close of the Ch'ing, Confucius was promoted to this rank. In the second were, among others, the sun and the moon, many famous rulers of antiquity, such as Yao and Shun, the chief disciples of Confucius and the leading exponents of his doctrines, distinguished men and women of virtue and learning, and the Gods of the Sky, of the Clouds, of Rain, Wind, and Thunder. In the third were great physicians of the past, the God of War, the Ruler of the North Star, the God of Fire, the Oty Gods (Gods of the Walls and Moats), and a number of others [x]